THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (JOHN 15: 2).

No. 50, Vol. LXXVII. Thursday, December 16, 1915. Price One Penny.

OUR SUPERIOR FAITH.

FAITH is the principle of power which governs all action; consequently, the stronger our faith in regard to any given matter, the more intelligent will be our course. The words of the Apostle Paul, as recorded in Hebrews 11: 1, tell us that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Then, our faith in God and His omnipotent power rests altogether upon the evidence we have at our disposal.

To the Christian world in general, undoubtedly, the strongest testimony, or evidence, comes from a universal belief in the Bible. Here is given a short account of the creation of the world, and the appearance on this earth of our earthly parents. From Genesis we learn that God personally instructed Adam and Eve; and from them passed a correct knowledge of God to at least eight distinct generations. This knowledge, by similar means, was carried down to the advent of the Christ, in the meridian of time. From the New Testament all gain unimpeachable testimony of the life, ministry, and ascension of the Lord.

Now it is my purpose to show that, through the source of other divine records, both ancient and modern, the Latter-day Saints gain a testimony that makes their faith much stronger, and, consequently, more intelligent than the faith exercised by any other body of religious worshipers.

In the Book of Mormon is given the account of some righteous people who lived at Jerusalem prior to the time of its destruction, and especially how they left the city, in obedience to the warnings of God, and finally established themselves as a mighty race of people in the western hemisphere. A further account of their

history is quite as fully and as reliably given as the history recorded in the Bible. The record of the Savior's appearance and ministration among "His sheep" of the western fold, is as real as that given in the New Testament.

Understanding that faith comes from reliable evidence, we can see that through the knowledge given in the Book of Mormon, we, as a people, are far in advance of those who have not yet come to regard it as a divine record.

We have yet to bring to our aid the strongest and most conclusive of all evidence obtainable through any possible source—the Doctrine and Covenants, or the revelations given through Joseph Smith, the Prophet, concerning the will of God with respect to our actions in this dispensation. Here proof is given, further establishing the truth of the Bible and the Book of Mormon. All evidence is made fresh, facts are impressed more firmly; and then the characteristics and attributes of God, and the Christ, and likewise the Holy Ghost, are very simply and comprehensively explained. Consider the plain words as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 110: 2-4: "We saw the Lord standing upon the breast-work of the pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire, the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great water, even the voice of Jehovah, saying—I am the first and the last, I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain, I am your advocate with the Father."

The Prophet, at another time, while speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit, in defining some of the attributes of Deity, said: "First, that he was God before the world was created, and the same God that he was after it was created. Secondly, that he is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness, and that he was so from everlasting, and will be to everlasting. Thirdly, that he changes not, neither is there variableness with him; but that he is the same from everlasting to everlasting, being the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and that his course is one eternal round, without variation. Fourthly, that he is a God of truth, and cannot lie. Fifthly, that he is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that fears God and works righteousness is accepted of him. Sixthly, that he is love."

Realizing the importance of faith, and knowing that the cultivation of this principle will enable us better to fight a winning battle in life, we should strive to increase our faith by acquainting ourselves with all reliable evidence and testimony of God.

Bristol. ELMER B. EDWARDS.

WE have time enough for the longest duty, but not for the shortest sins.—DR. MARTINEAU.

THE TEACHINGS OF "MORMONISM" ABOUT CHRIST, THE ATONEMENT, ETC.

SUCH is the heading to the last chapter of the anti-Mormon booklet, *The Bible Teaching About Christ*, proving, without doubt, that its object is to disprove "Mormon" doctrine. The writer states:

"As many who are more or less closely attached to the 'Mormon' belief will read this booklet, it is felt that our duty would not be discharged without a brief word on some points of 'Mormon' teaching in this line which ought to be modified. Surely every real friend of the truth should welcome all truth. Surely no one can rightly claim to be His follower, if he refuses any truth regarding Him, or knowingly holds anything erroneous about any subject."

The writer further states: "The early parts of the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants, contain only the Bible idea of God; while the Pearl of Great Price and the latter part of the Doctrine and Covenants teach what has become the general modern doctrine of God in 'Mormonism,' which is as directly contrary to the former and true teaching as it could well be, and resembles the beliefs of pagan nations far more than the truth; though it is not held by all 'Mormons.'

"After a complete study of this book (Book of Mormon), we find many points of essentially true Bible teaching about Christ and salvation."

We do indeed welcome all truth, so much so that we protest against our worthy friend's declaring that the 'Mormon' teaching on certain subjects agrees with sectarian rendering of the Bible. The "points of essentially true Bible teaching" the writer refers to are hell, sin, trinity, and divinity of Christ. A close study of these principles will prove that "Mormon" teaching does not coincide with that of orthodox preachers. We differ on almost every point.

We teach the divine nature of Christ, most certainly; but not that He and God the Father were identical. Christ was perfectly human, and when His earthly life was ended, He took with Him to heaven both His human and His divine nature. We also teach that all who sin must pay the penalty, but we most certainly do not teach that little children are born in sin, as is taught by sectarians, for such doctrine is contrary to the teaching of Christ. We believe that the spirits of little children come straight from heaven, and are pure and spotless, and should those little ones die before reaching the age of accountability, they will go straight back to the Father in heaven. As the Prophet Joseph Smith said: "Mothers, you shall have your children, for they shall have eternal life: for their debt is paid; there is no damnation awaiting them, for they are in the spirit. As the child dies, so shall it rise

from the dead and be forever living in the learning of God; it shall be the child, the same as it was before it died out of your arms. Children dwell and exercise power in the same form as they laid them down." How much grander is this than the doctrine that teaches that little babies go to hell, unless a clergyman has sprinkled them with water?

We do not believe that Adam's sin rests upon the head of every child born into the world. Christ has atoned for Adam's sin. Every individual, after the age of responsibility, has to account for his own sins and for none besides. I do not think many of us would find ourselves in the same place as a young Catholic girl I knew in the north of England. She had to go to confession once a month. Confession day came round, and she found herself in the confession box about 7:15 p.m. On the way there she had ransacked her mind for some sin to confess. She said she knew she must have done something wrong during the month, but the puzzle was what? At last she remembered that one morning she was in a hurry, and forgot to say her prayers, and so, arriving in the confession box, she said, "Oh, holy father, I forgot to say my prayers." "Daughter," said the priest, "that was very wrong of you, and now you must kneel down and say: (here he told her the prayers she must repeat). Time was passing. The last train for her home left at eight o'clock, and if she missed that, she had seven miles to walk along a lonely country road; so she hurried through first one and then another, at the end of each saying, under her breath, "I pray I don't miss that train"; or, "I wonder if I shall catch it," etc. On an occasion like this, it might be convenient to borrow an ancestor's sin, but usually we each have more than enough of our own.

The subject of sin naturally leads one to the atonement, and the anti-"Mormon" writer states:

"The atonement is stated forcibly in the Christian view, though not well in form, in Alma 34: 6-17," and then he quotes, "He shall bring salvation unto all those who shall believe on his name."

Here he is trying to blind his readers by making them believe the "Mormons" uphold the "belief-alone" doctrine, or rather that the Book of Mormon teaches such doctrine. Again we protest. Never since the Church was established have we upheld such doctrine, contrary to all scripture as it is. "Faith without works is dead," and never have we upheld the teaching which says, "Just say 'I believe' with your latest breath, and no matter what kind of life you have lived, angel forms will waft your soul right into the presence of the Father." We teach that, "Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," and the will of the Father is, "Repent, and be baptized, and ye shall receive remission of your sins." That "belief-alone" doctrine is far too risky for one who lives amongst the mountains. In the mountains

here we have what are called electric showers. The lightning flashes out and plays up and down behind the mountains, lighting up the country side. Supposing I had never confessed belief in Christ, had lived all my life as though He were non-existent, and supposing, when I was standing admiring the handiwork of the Great Creator, as I love to do when these storms are around, feeling my own incompetence and the greatness and grandeur of our God, just supposing that electric wave were attracted to me; well, what time would I have to say, "Here, wait a moment, I believe"? My soul would have taken its flight and been wafted hence before ever the words had reached my lips. How useless it is to postpone the salvation of one's soul till the angel of death stands beside one! That angel is often in a hurry, he has no time to wait until you have made your peace with God. The only safe way is to do as the Lord tells you, "Repent and be baptized," and this is the only way the "Mormons" teach, and whoever says we preach that because Christ atoned for our sins, we have nothing to do, knows not of what he speaks.

He atoned for Adam's sin, in so far as He shed His blood and made it possible for Adam and all His race to again become immortal beings, and He opened up the way by which every individual could save himself, and the sooner sectarian preachers and their followers learn that salvation is an individual matter, so much sooner will the atonement make all the world at one with God. Where would be the fairness, where the justice, if Christ had done all that was necessary? What is the use of having a personality, individuality; what is the use of living at all, of striving to surmount difficulties, to keep yourself pure and unspotted from the world, if in the end all are to receive the same reward and occupy the same sphere?

If the "Mormon" doctrine is true, and we shall occupy the place for which we have fitted ourselves, what an incentive is here to fight against sin and human weaknesses and strive for that perfection which Christ told us to make our aim!

MOLLIE HIGGINSON.

WE often hear people, young and old, complaining that they are not rich. We ourselves have probably all indulged, now and then, in this complaint. We like to dream of the things we would do if we had lots of money, But there is something that we all have plenty of. And if we used it rightly and wisely we might gain riches, or almost anything we chose to seek. It is something without which money or talent or any great possession is valueless. So, in a sense, it is more valuable than any of these things. Yet we waste it, and throw it away, as if it were the least important, of our possessions. It is, of course—time.—*The Christian Herald.*

PAGANISM AND SECTARIAN WORSHIP.

ALL religions hold that the destiny of finite beings is controlled by an infinite, or a number of infinite beings, and it is only in the conception of the latter that the faiths of mankind are distinguished. A popular belief—fostered by those who should know better—is that the pagans, or heathens, are irrationally worshiping only fantastic, man-made, inanimate objects. I remember how, as a child, I was often moved to attend a sectarian Sunday school, by the stories of the "poor heathen" which were told from time to time by persons who were anxious to convert him, and how several of my humble pennies were parted with in response to the appeal for funds, which were said to be essential for the purpose. I little thought at the time that I should grow to think that the objects of so much pity were almost as enlightened on religious matters as those who were appealing for money to teach them. This observation may seem an extraordinary one, even to some Latter-day Saints; but let us consider the matter.

The fundamental principles of paganism are aptly stated in a small English dictionary, which I have before me as I write. They are as follows: "Idol.—An image or symbol of a deity, consecrated as an object of worship * * *." Now, from this definition it is plain that the pagan, or heathen, does not think the inanimate object of his veneration has any power or virtue as such, as many suppose, but only as an "image or symbol of a deity." These deities—for there are usually more than one—are supposed in some mysterious way to control the elements of nature and the destinies of mankind. They are invariably regarded as spirits, and are thought to require much adoration or worship, and it is believed that those who are the most insistent in their devotions and homage will receive the greatest favors, whilst the indifferent will be severely scourged for their neglect. These worshipers, in the popular mind, have always been, and are still, savages, who run about naked and attack the benevolent missionaries who are sent to enlighten them. But it is not so. The bearers of some of the greatest names in the history of the world were heathens. Julius Cæsar was a heathen; so were Socrates, Plato, Aeschylus, and others whose fame will live as long as the world stands.

Having considered the heathen, or pagan, religion, it is now our duty to compare it with Christianity, as taught by the representative churches. That they are divided on certain points is of no importance to our study. We have only to find out their fundamental principles, as we did in our investigation of heathendom, and compare them.

First, we find a Godhead consisting of three spirits, which, merged in one, are diffused throughout the universe and cannot be seen, heard, or felt. This intangible God, or association of Gods, has complete dominion over everything in the universe.

Honor, and everlasting glory are promised to those who will worship, or pay homage, to Him; but those who will not are to be destroyed, or rather tortured, which is much worse, by everlasting fire. This all-powerful, omnipresent Godhead is not represented by an object carved in the form of a living thing, as we found it in paganism. Its symbols are the cross and a sacrament table, in what are called the "lower" Protestant churches, but in the "high" church, and the Roman church, they are extended. In case my meaning is not clear, I would remind the reader that the sacrament table is held as sacred by all church people, and such terms as "Holy Table," "The Lord's Table," "God's Altar," etc., are applied to it. Further, it is bowed to by both priest and congregation in a great many churches, whilst at ordinary times the congregation of every church turns to it and makes obeisance during the reading of that part of the ritual called the "Confession." Clergymen firmly believe that they meet the Savior at this table at the partaking of the sacrament.

I cannot conclude this article without considering outstanding points of a general character on which paganism and modern "Christianity" agree. In the first place, both systems are characterized by a magnificent ritual, and by paid priests who do no "secular" work, and assume a distinctive dress, or uniform. Both systems may be found under the auspices of the state, whenever possible. They also agree in regard to surrounding their religion with awe and mystery, so that only the priests may understand it. Particularly is this the case with the Roman church, for the priests are averse to their adherents reading the Bible. But ask any clergyman of the English church whether a layman need study the faith as much as himself, and he will say, not unless the layman desires to ultimately take "Holy Orders." But the last, and by no means the least, point, on which paganism and modern "Christianity" agree, is the bitter hatred against those who dare to think for themselves. How different is "Mormonism," so-called! Many people do not study it when they get an opportunity, because they think it cannot be of any use to them, since it belongs to an unpopular people. They do not stop to think that it is their religion which has made them unpopular, which is quite a different thing. And why has it made them unpopular? Because it denounces the craft of a corrupt priesthood and will not compromise, even to obtain the good will of the greatest and most influential amongst them.

Downham Market. FRED. L. W. BENNETT.

WRETCHED, poor, and naked is he who is without the gospel of Christ. He may wear fashionable clothes, live in a stately mansion, and move in the most select society, but if he knows not the truth, he is an object of pity, and not of envy.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1915.

EDITORIAL.

PARADISE AND HEAVEN.

A SHORT time ago a gentleman addressed to us an inquiry on this subject. He wrote, in part:

"Having received one of your pamphlets headed, *First Principles of the True Gospel of Christ*, my attention was drawn to this statement on page 2, 'By this we learn that *Paradise* and *Heaven* are two distinct places, and as Jesus did not go to heaven on the day He was crucified, neither did the thief; for they were both together in Paradise.'

"I am somewhat bewildered with your assertion, and shall be glad if you can help me to an understanding on a firmer basis."

Undoubtedly, many students of the Scriptures are in the dark concerning the great truth so briefly, but clearly, stated in the pamphlet referred to. It is one of the truths which the world generally has lost sight of, in the conflict that has raged between the various churches on other questions, such as those pertaining to the Trinity, justification by faith, the sacraments, authority, etc., and having passed out of view, it has been all but forgotten and dismissed as idle speculation, or an unsolvable mystery. That is the reason why it seems so bewildering to many, when they hear it stated for the first time. If, however, they will open their hearts and let the light of the Scripture in, they will understand it, in part, at least, and rejoice in the goodness and mercy of God toward His children.

The subject can be conveniently considered under the following questions:

Are not Paradise and Heaven the same place? Did not Jesus go to Heaven when He expired on the cross?

1. The places in the world beyond, known as Paradise and Heaven, respectively, are not identical.

The word *Paradise* is said to be of Persian origin, and means a place where there are beautiful trees and flowers, and where all kinds of animals are kept. It means a *park*. The Jews adopted the word into their language some time after the captivity. The Greek translators of the Scriptures, about the year 285 B.C., called the Garden in the land of Eden, *Paradeisos*, of which our *Paradise* is the English form.

The Garden in the land of Eden was an earthly Paradise planted by the Lord, and we must regard that beautiful spot as a counter-

part of some beautiful region in the land of spirits, on the other side of the veil, whence our first parents came. They did not, therefore, find themselves in a strange place on this earth, on their first arrival, but in a familiar spot. That things earthly are but a copy of heavenly things is indicated by the fact that the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the Temple with its elaborate service, were copied after celestial patterns, as we are told in Heb. 8: 5; 9: 23: "See * * * that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount." The earthly Paradise does no longer exist, but that in the land beyond remains; for in the Revelation we read, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2: 7); from which we may conclude that the Paradise beyond, with its tree of life, still exists, and that one of the rewards of the conquerors of evil is permission to partake of the fruit of that tree.

According to the Scriptures, the spirits of men at death all go to a place called, in the Old Testament, *Sheol*, and in the New, *Hades*. This is the *Land of the Dead*, also called the *Grave*. But in this land there are many places, just as there are in every country in the *Land of the Living*. All men in the Land of the Living are not in the same place; neither are all the departed ones in the Land of the Dead. We know there is such a place as Paradise in this land; also a "prison." How many more different places there may be is not revealed. And, therefore, it is evident that all do not, at death, go to the same place. A thousand passengers may land in the United States from the same steamer; but all do not go to the same place there; after landing, they scatter. Some may go to a pleasant locality; others to one with a rigorous climate; some may achieve wealth, honor, and power, and live in palaces; others may meet misfortunes, or enter a criminal career and find themselves in the grip of the law—in prison. The case is similar with those who enter *Sheol*. Some have access to Paradise; others must remain outside that place; some are even confined in "prison," as was the case with those disobedient in the days of Noah (I. Peter 3: 19).

That Paradise is a place where the favored spirits enjoy great happiness is clear from II. Cor. 12: 4, where we read that St. Paul had had the wonderful privilege of entering that enclosure, where he heard "unspeakable words," and, I have no doubt, saw things indescribable. Part of the pleasures there are what would correspond to social functions on earth, i.e., association with our blessed Savior and His faithful saints, for the rich man saw Lazarus in "Abraham's bosom"; that is to say, having the place of honor at a banquet presided over by Abraham. In Paradise, and also outside, and even in the prison, the gospel is being preached, as we learn from I. Peter 4: 6: "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead," etc. What a glorious truth! Truly, the mercy of God "endureth for ever," and does not end at the edge of the grave.

The word heaven has a meaning different from that now considered. In a general way, heaven means all that is above earth. When the inspired authors talk of "rain from heaven" (Gen. 8: 2), "fowls of heaven" (Luke 13: 19), they refer to the atmosphere. But above this "heaven" is the starry "heaven" (Deut. 1: 10; Isa. 13: 10, and many other passages). Then, above all is the *heaven*, or region, where God dwells. God is present, through the influence of His Holy Spirit, everywhere, but He dwells, in a special sense, in some place, where His "throne" is, just as His glory dwelt in the Tabernacle and the Temple, resting upon the Mercy Seat between the Cherubim. And that place is what we mean by "heaven," when we refer to the eternal abode of God.

Paradise is part of heaven, just as a royal park on earth may be part of the domain of the king, though not the palace in which he dwells. To be admitted to the presence of the king is quite different from being permitted to enjoy certain privileges of the royal park. This illustrates, we believe, very well the difference between Paradise and Heaven. Paradise is not far from the palace of the King, for Paul says he was "caught up to the third heaven" (II. Cor. 12: 2-4), when he was permitted to enter Paradise. It is, then, part of heaven, but it is not the place where the glory of God rests in its effulgence.

2. Now, Christ did not go directly into the presence of His Father, after His death on the cross. He went to a place where spirits of men were waiting for the message that His atonement had been accomplished, and that His triumph over the adversary was complete. He proclaimed the good news to them, and then He returned to Earth and remained with His disciples for forty days, teaching them the truths the possession of which enabled them to become His witnesses to the world. Hence His promise to the repentant thief, "To-day shall thou be with me in Paradise"—not in Heaven, the palace of God. And there, I have no doubt, that sinner, together with a multitude of others, has had an opportunity to hear the gospel and prepare himself for future development, exaltation, and glory.

President Brigham Young, speaking on the subject of salvation, says:

"The priesthood of the Lord, as again bestowed upon those who will receive it, is for the express purpose of preparing them to become proficient in the principles pertaining to the law of the celestial kingdom. If we obey this law, preserve it inviolate, live according to it, we shall be prepared to enjoy the blessings of a celestial kingdom. Will any others? Yes, thousands and millions of the inhabitants of the earth who would have received and obeyed the law that we preach, if they had had the privilege. * * * The celestial is the highest of all. The telestial and the terrestrial are also spoken of; and how many more kingdoms of glory there are is not for me to say. I do not know that they are not innumerable."

This is in line with the thought expressed in these paragraphs, that Paradise is but one spot in one of the kingdoms of our God and Father.

Some say that neither Paradise, nor heaven, is a place, but a state of mind. They forget that a state of mind, a purely abstract concept, cannot exist except in connection with a concrete being, who necessarily occupies space. Rotundity, hardness, malleability, etc., do not exist by themselves, but in connection with matter, and that occupies space. It is the same with happiness, or misery, of mind. They are qualities, and depend for their existence upon the existence of somebody who can feel happy, or the opposite, and every concrete being occupies space. Paradise is, therefore, a place, as well as a state of mind. And so is heaven.

Perhaps it should be added that there is hardly sufficient reason for supposing that the two malefactors were common "thieves." They were, rather, "robbers." In the eyes of the Romans they were certainly "bandits," but, if they were *Zealots*, that is to say, followers of Judas the Galilean, they were, in the eyes of many Jews, patriots whose aim was the liberation of the country from foreign rule. Two sons of Judas, Jacob and Simon, were also crucified, as dangerous rebels, and the "thiefs" may have belonged to that class. At all events, this "thief" must have had some knowledge of the gospel. Perhaps he had heard John the Baptist, and also our Lord, preach. He certainly had faith in the Crucified One, for he turned in the supreme moment to Him and addressed Him as his King, though His only "token of royalty was the crown of thorns that still clung to His bleeding brows."

J. M. S.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

A SPECIAL feature of the Christmas number of the *Millennial Star*, this year, will be a Christmas story of timely interest, written for the *Star*. There will be some other timely articles in the same issue. Readers of the *Star*, who would like to distribute the number among friends, should send in their orders so as to reach us not later than Monday (first post), December 20th, so as to give the publishers an idea of how many extra copies to print. Let us give the *Star* as wide a circulation as we can. Everyone likes to read a good Christmas story, and we venture to hope that this is one.

A SERMON'S length is not its strength. It may be very much its weakness. In this case brevity is a virtue. It is a pity to weary the head when we should win the heart. Some divines are long in their sermons because they are short in their studies.—SPURGEON.

PRAYER.

ONE of the greatest, and yet simplest, principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that is much neglected by God's children, is prayer. Prayer was instituted by God as a means through which His children could receive guidance. We have many instances, in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, of this great principle being taught and practiced. Adam, the first man to offer prayer, and all great men in history, such as Abraham, Gideon, David, and Solomon, have felt the necessity of asking their heavenly Father for guidance. Even our Savior felt the necessity of the aid and assistance of His Father. He taught His disciples how to pray, and, no doubt, they were amazed at the simplicity of that prayer, and the difference between it and those to which they had been accustomed. Now, if these men needed divine assistance, should we not, as children of God, seek earnestly for the same divine help?

It is our duty and privilege to know the only true and living God, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I. Cor. 2: 11). The first thing to do, is to seek to learn the character of God, for if men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves. God has instituted prayer as a means whereby we may learn of Him, and His will concerning us.

We can give many definitions of prayer, as our hymn gives some: "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed"; "Prayer is the simplest form of speech that infant lips can try"; "Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice, returning from his ways," etc. Also, prayer is the solemn, sincere, and faithful petition unto God by His children for things which they need. By these few definitions we learn what prayer is.

At one time Christ's disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray," and He said, "After this manner therefore pray ye" (Matt. 6: 9). Then followed the wonderful, yet simple and plain prayer, which is repeated so much throughout the so-called Christian world; and yet, when I have heard this prayer repeated, I have many and many a time wondered and thought if those engaged in the utterance of it realized its meaning.

In the first place, we say, "Our Father which art in heaven," which teaches us that God is our Father, and that we should address Him as such. Knowing that He is our Father, we can ask with faith, believing that we shall receive the blessings we desire. Jesus has said, by way of command, "Ask, and it shall be given unto you" (Matt. 7: 7); also that, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15: 16). Then we pray, "Hallowed be thy name." We should keep His name sacred,

revere and hallow it; never take His name in vain. Next we say, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Seek the kingdom of God first. It is better than riches. His kingdom is for those who are found obedient, true, and keeping His commandments. Also, His will should be done here on the earth, as it is in heaven. Surely, God's children must learn obedience here upon the earth, so that they will be prepared to be obedient in heaven. Then, we are taught to pray for "our daily bread." This shows that we should ask for temporal things, as well as spiritual; it is not amiss to ask God to help us in our labors or business. Next we pray, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." O! how this would tend toward peace, if all were willing to forgive. No greater example can be given than that of our Savior, as He hung upon the cross, suffering untold agony, and yet praying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23: 34). This is a great lesson to be learned by God's children. Thus, if we have feelings towards our brethren or sisters, let us remember the instructions in this prayer. Then we ask, "Lead us not into temptation," or, as the French Bible puts it, "Abandon us not," or leave us not in temptation; but we must try our best to shun all evils, and the Father will help us to overcome them. The prayer closes, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." We know He is all-good, all-powerful, and worthy of all praise, and we should rejoice in the promise that He will hear and answer our prayers.

Now, Christ never meant that we should always use that prayer, but He gave it as a model. It shows us the simple manner in which to pray, not to use high-sounding words or vain repetitions, nor to pray to be considered of men, but to become as a little child, "and not to be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6: 5-6).

Also, ask through the name of Jesus Christ. "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I. Thess. 5: 18). Prayer does not consist of words only, nor do the most acceptable prayers consist of the best and choicest language; but the prayer that counts is uttered with the seal of the heart's desire. Paul told the Thessalonians to pray without ceasing; but here is the key: Pray often, ask in faith, nothing wavering, for let not that man who doubts think he shall receive anything of God; ask not for things that are of no use to yourself or others, but use wisdom in all prayers. God knows what things you need before you ask of Him; also, He knows all our actions, we cannot hide anything from Him, if we can from man, so we

should guard our actions closely, and, as it has been said, "Guard well your thoughts, for they are known in heaven."

Some people say they see no benefits or results in prayer. To such I may say, that their prayers are perhaps not made in sincerity; from personal experience thousands upon thousands can bear testimony that God does hear and answer prayers. Prayer tends to better the inner-man, and humbles those who engage in it. When we pray, we think of our own faults and not of those of others, for when we bow down in humility before God, these things come before us. And many have experienced in times when dark hours of trouble have come, that a good, honest prayer gives relief and satisfaction.

Another result of prayer is the saving of the sick, as we are told in James 5: 14-16: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Let us, then, make prayer our friend, and put our trust in God; ask for those blessings of which we stand in need. Those who attend to prayer faithfully and properly will grow better and happier, and when the end comes, they will look back with satisfaction and joy on their past life.

NORWICH. PERRY C. HALL.

ARE WE PREPARED?

THE above interrogatory, concerning the second coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has often been asked of late. Why should this query be asked and obsess our minds to a great extent, when we live in so great an age of understanding and enlightenment, when people should know what signs and wonders would precede the second coming of the King of kings? It is because the people are in a state of unpreparedness.

We have heard during these troublous times of signs that certain people have seen; but the reports have been cast aside as founded on delusions. But what did Christ Himself say, O, ye wise people of understanding minds? Did He not say that His gospel should be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then should the end come? Is not this gospel—the gospel of Jesus Christ—the gospel of faith, repentance, and baptism, being preached to all nations? Again, did He not say, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it also be in the days of the Son of Man"? In the days of Noe, we understand that the people were given over to drinking, feasting, marriage, etc., and they gave no

thought to the warnings and exhortations of the prophet Noah. What was the result? When the flood did come, they were not prepared.

It is just the same to-day. Joseph Smith and his followers have been exhorting the people of the latter days for nearly a century, and still there are millions of souls who turn a deaf ear to these cries of "Repent, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Christ said that "He would come like a thief in the night," and that if He told them at what hour He would come, they would wait for Him—they would be prepared for His coming. But this would not be right. There would be thousands who would accept the gospel at the last minute; it would be like a death-bed repentance. One of the greatest signs that is evident to all, is the warring of the great nations. Jesus Christ said, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Very nearly the whole of the world has tasted war, and still men are like the people in the days of Noe. Those faithful members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are in the minority to those who do not accept the sayings and teachings of Jesus Christ. Still they—the members of the Church—are prepared, and are trying to teach the people of the world concerning the wonders and the mysteries that are contained in the gospel of Christ. The children of God can say with Job, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

Could anything be more plain than these words of Job? They are very emphatic concerning the coming of Christ. And in the New Testament we have the sayings of two heavenly beings who appeared unto the apostles at the ascension of Christ: "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." These sayings give us conclusive evidence that Christ will come. Then let us try to be prepared for His coming. There will be some who will not be ready, and they are the people who are persecuting the emissaries of Christ's gospel; and these are the people whose hearts will fail them for fear, and who will call upon the rocks to fall upon them to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb.

My brothers, sisters, and friends, the restitution of all things is about completed, and let us take notice of all the solemn warnings that are uttered—and let us be prepared.

Beverley. REGINALD A. HANSON.

WHAT is most important is to have a soul which loves truth, and recognizes it wherever it finds it.

HOME.

Our home is always where our affections are. We sigh and wander, we vibrate to and fro, till we rest in that special centre where our deepest loves are garnered up. Then the heart fills and brims over with its own happiness, and spreads sweetness and fertility all around it. Very often, when the eyes are closing in death, and this world is shutting off the sight from the departing soul, the last wish which is made audible is "to go home." The words break out sometimes through the cloud of delirium; but it is the soul's deepest and most central want groping after its object, happily soon to find it as the clogs of earth clear away and she springs up on the line of swift affection, as the bee with unerring precision shoots through the dusk of evening to her cell.—E. H. Sears (*Foregleams of Immortality*).

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Releases and Departures.—The following named missionaries have been honorably released from their labors in the British mission, and sailed for home December 10th, 1915, per s.s. *Pretorian*: Harold James Bishop, Austin B. Hunter, David E. Roberts.

DIED.

Purvis.—At South Shields (Newcastle conference), November 30th, 1915, Anthony Purvis. Deceased was baptized June 4th, 1915, by Elder Earl C. Morgan, and confirmed by Elder John M. Rothlisberger. Brother Purvis was a faithful Latter-day Saint.

CONTENTS:

Our Superior Faith 785
The Teachings of "Mormonism" About Christ, the Atonement, etc. 787
Paganism and Sectarian Worship 790
Editorial:
Paradise and Heaven ... 792
Prayer... 796
Are We Prepared? 798
Home 800
From the Mission Field 800

EDITED, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HYRUM M. SMITH, 295 EDGE LANE, LIVERPOOL:

FOR SALE IN ALL THE CONFERENCES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN GREAT BRITAIN.